

Army Long Term Family Case Management



Summer 2009

www.altfcm.army.mil

866-272-5841

CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP AT ARMY LONG TERM FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT

LTC Benny Starks assumed the duties and responsibilities of the Army Long Term Family Case Management (ALTFCM) Branch in June of 2009. As Branch Chief of ALTFCM, LTC Starks replaced LTC Betsy Graham, who served as the face of the Army's Survivor services branch for close to two years.

Army Long Term Family Case Management is responsible for providing dedicated service to the Survivors of the Army's Fallen Soldiers. The Branch Chief is responsible for representing the cause of the Survivor at various military and civilian forums, and is often at the helm when championing for the needs of the Survivor population. LTC Graham became a familiar face to many Survivors over the years, and while many only recognize the voice or the name, the lasting impact of her work is sure to be felt for years to come. A note from LTC Graham can be found on page 3.



Soldiers and Airmen Praying During a Service at Dover

MEDIA POLICY CHANGE FOR PHOTOGRAPHING FALLEN SOLDIERS ARRIVING AT DOVER

A change in policy initiated by the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense now allows the media to photograph the remains of Fallen Soldiers arriving at Dover Air Force Base (AFB) in Dover, Delaware. The Secretary of Defense authorized the change in policy, which went into effect on April 6, 2009. The new policy was based on the recommendations and guidance from all branches of the military and ends the 18-year ban on media coverage of returning Fallen U.S. service members. With the consent of next of kin, media are now allowed to photograph the dignified transfer of returning Fallen Soldiers as they arrive at Dover AFB in Delaware.

SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR FALLEN SOLDIERS' LOVED ONES

A NOTE FROM THE NEW CHIEF OF ALTFCM

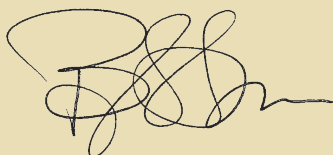
As the incoming Chief of the Army Long Term Family Case Management (ALTFCM) branch, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve you and will remain committed to providing unparalleled support and service to our Survivors.

The Soldiers and civilians that make up ALTFCM will continue to provide selfless support and aggressively identify and resolve any issues that may surface after the death of a loved one. We will be forever vigilant in pursuing our mission—a one-stop resolution center committed to help connect, coordinate, monitor and support the needs of Families of our fallen heroes by providing compassionate advocacy services using available Army and external resources.

I view this assignment as the Chief of ALTFCM as my most important assignment to date. I am truly humbled to have been given this opportunity and am committed to ensuring all Survivors continue to receive the highest level of service.

As you read through this newsletter, I ask that you consider informing us of ways to improve future publications. Similarly, I welcome your feedback on how we can better serve you. Your comments, suggestions, and concerns are always welcome.

This commitment to support is the Army's covenant with you and we will work diligently to uphold that promise. We encourage you to contact our office by phone, toll-free at 866-272-5841, or visit us online at www.altfcm.army.mil. Thank you again for your time and your service. We look forward to serving you.



Benny L. Starks, Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, United States Army
Chief, Army Long Term Family Case Management



The Importance of Keeping in Touch —

Help us help you.

Please let us know of any changes in your contact information so that we are better able to serve you.

**“You will never know how much it has meant to me
the respect you have shown to my son and to me.”**

– S.H., Ohio



A NOTE FROM LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RET) BETSY GRAHAM

It has been an honor serving you these past years. I wanted to take a moment to thank you for allowing me and my staff the incredible opportunity to help resolve some of the challenges you face after the death of your Soldier. It has been a privilege to get to know some of you and to help you in honoring the memory of your loved one.

Through the years I have come to hold your memories near to my heart and your cause is one in which I believe deeply. I hope you will continue to turn to the Army as it continues to build better programs that serve you.

As I leave this position, I am confident that the men and women who are answering your calls every day and fighting on your behalf are truly dedicated, trained, caring individuals who will carry on tirelessly. I have no doubt that LTC Starks will come to know some of you as I have and that the relationships we've built over the years will continue to grow and strengthen.

With that, I wish you well and hope that we continue to remain Army strong.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy A. Graham".

Betsy Graham
Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), United States Army

UPDATE ON SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Since February 2008, under the direction of the Secretary and the Chief of Staff of the Army, an advisory panel comprised of Army agencies and Surviving Spouses has been working to develop a comprehensive program to better support Families of our Fallen Soldiers. This program, called Survivor Outreach Services (SOS), was officially launched in October 2008 and represents a comprehensive Army program to support Survivors for as long as they desire.



SOS has begun functioning as a collaborative effort of the US Army for Surviving Families. Surviving Families will have greater access to resources, support, and benefits. The Army Long Term Family Case Management (ALTFCM) Branch will continue to serve as a dedicated resource for Families of our Fallen and will be a critical component of SOS.

The U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command (FMWRC) will serve as the lead agency in coordinating the program for all Survivors. With joint coordination between FMWRC, Army Installation and Management Command (IMCOM), and the Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center (CMAOC), SOS will be a completely matrixed and interdependent program that can maximize support to all Survivors.

Under the new program, changes to the current structure will include a Support Coordinator and Financial Counselor dedicated solely to Survivor support. Additionally, training and services will be standardized across the board so that Families consistently receive the same high level of attention, respect, and dignified treatment. Financial Counselors will be available to all Survivors to help assist with budget planning and link individuals to estate and financial planners for coordinated support. Family Programs will also provide and coordinate support groups, counseling, and life skills education to help create a more comprehensive approach to providing Survivor support.



ARMY LONG TERM FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT: WHERE FAMILIES ARE FIRST

Families really are first at ALTFCM and our wall of thank you letters from you are our badges of honor. We can never presume to ease the burden of the sacrifice you and your Family have made, but we can work daily to make sure that you have all the resources you need at your fingertips so that we are not adding difficulties to your life.

We are always interested in hearing your thoughts and comments, and would like to start highlighting, with your permission, some of the letters we receive from our Surviving Family members. Thank you for sharing your stories with us, for trusting us with helping you honor and preserve your memories, and for allowing us to be a part of your journey. We look forward to continuing to serve you and your Family.

CHILD AND YOUTH SERVICES

The outreach services advisory panel, led by The U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command (FMWRC) convened during the last quarter. One of the updates provided focused on the Army Child, Youth and School Services Program (CYS). This program exists to support military readiness by reducing the conflict between a Soldier's mission requirements and his or her parental responsibilities. The CYS has several Soldier-Family action plan initiatives, to include:

- **CYS Services Operations:** which involves extending operating hours, reducing child care/youth program fees, and providing transportation for youth to access after school and sports activities;
- **Child Care:** expanding hourly/respite care and increasing Army community based child care programs;
- **Youth Programs:** providing/updating youth technology labs and expanding youth deployment cycle programming;
- **School Transition and Support Services:** conducting additional school counselor institutes, increasing and sustaining Parent2Parent/Student2Student Programs, and providing Pre-K School Readiness Classes;
- **CYS Service Staff:** Providing mission fatigue incentives for CYS Services Staff and deploying CYS Services Transition Mobile Teams to help with surge requirements.

There are many other programs that CYS provides. Please feel free to contact CYS staff at 703-698-1720.

"I wanted to say thank you for all of your assistance and support throughout this process. We've been working together on this issue well over 6 months and you have always exhibited patience and compassion while moving towards a resolution. I really appreciate your generosity and consistency of follow up."

– D.F.P., North Carolina

BENEFITS FOR STEPCHILDREN

In the eyes of the Army, legal stepchildren or adopted children of deceased Soldiers are entitled to the same benefits as natural or biological children. In most cases, the Army is aware of all of a Soldier's dependents at the time of his or her death and is able to ensure they are properly cared for, and receive all applicable Survivor benefits. It is possible, however, that at the time of a Soldier's death a stepchild is not properly accounted for as the next of kin. If this happens, it can result in delayed Survivor benefits.

Currently, ALTFCM is conducting an internal review of all stepchildren to ensure they are in receipt of all



applicable benefits. We also ask that you please contact us at your earliest convenience if you or your loved ones feel that you might not be receiving all applicable benefits, so that we may review your individual situation and assist you with any necessary benefits applications.

GUIDE TO SHORT-TERM GRIEF COUNSELING RESOURCES

As a new feature in our newsletters, we will highlight a frequently asked question or a common area of concern among Survivors. One of the more common needs among Survivors is for professional counseling or peer mentoring services to help deal with the loss of a loved one. Fortunately, there are several counseling and mentoring resources available to Survivors through both government and private organizations. Though not a complete listing, below are some of the resources available to Survivors. Survivors are welcome to contact these different organizations or ask ALTFM to arrange the counseling for them.

Veterans Affairs (VA) Bereavement Counseling – The VA offers no-cost professional bereavement counseling services to spouses, children, and parents of deceased Soldiers. Bereavement counseling is assistance and support to people with emotional and psychological stress after the death of a loved one. Bereavement counseling includes a broad range of transition services including outreach, counseling, and referral services for family members. Services are obtained by contacting Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) at 202-273-9116 or via electronic mail at vet.center@va.gov, both of which are specific to this specialized service. RCS staff will assist families in contacting the nearest Vet Center. Initially, counseling may be available in the family's home or where the family feels most comfortable.

Tricare – Tricare is the only resource for problems requiring medical management or professional long-term counseling. Medical treatment provided through Tricare is available to a deceased Soldier's dependents, so long as they are enrolled in Tricare. Counseling services will normally require prior approval from a Primary Care Provider.

Military OneSource provides 12 free non-medical counseling sessions to immediate family members of deceased Soldiers (parents, spouses, and children). Military OneSource offers counseling face-to-face, over the phone, or through live chat. Military OneSource can be reached at 800-342-9647 or you may visit their website at: <https://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/About/CounselingServices.aspx>.

Giveanhour.org is a nationwide network of counseling professionals who volunteer their time to assist both Soldiers and Families who have been affected by the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Giveanhour.org provides a broad array of no-cost counseling services to spouses, children, parents, siblings, extended family members, and unmarried partners. To find out more information about this organization or to inquire about its services, you may visit them on the web at www.Giveanhour.org.

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) provides an on-line Peer Support Network and special program including a camp for children. TAPS does not offer counseling, but it does provide the opportunity to meet others who are working through experiences that may be similar to yours. If you are interested in either volunteering as a peer mentor or are interested in being partnered with a peer mentor, please contact TAPS at 800-959-8277 or visit them on the web at www.TAPS.org.

“Thanks for the info. I was about to give up and thought it was lost. Thank you for checking up on his things. Having his stuff will help heal my heart some.”

– C.J., California



INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Housing

Authorized dependents living in government quarters (including leased government housing) are eligible to remain in government housing for a year from the date of their loved one's death. If you depart government housing before the 365th day from your loved one's death, you will be reimbursed for the unused days at the current rate of Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for your loved one's pay grade. Authorized dependents can remain in government housing past the 365th day with the approval of the local Post Commander, although rental charges at the current rate will apply. Authorized dependents not residing in government housing are provided a lump sum payment of 365 days BAH. Surviving spouses who are also on active duty in the uniformed services are eligible for the housing allowance as an authorized dependent.

Moving and Storage of Household Goods

Authorized dependents have up to three years from the date of their loved one's death to move their household goods at the government's expense. The government will store a shipment of household goods for up to one year. Any temporary storage of household goods beyond one year will be at the expense of the Survivor and will only be done if extenuating circumstances warrant the extended storage. Household goods will include all personal property associated with the deceased Soldier's home. It also includes all personal effects belonging to the Soldier and his or her authorized dependents, which can be legally transported by an authorized commercial moving company.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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Inside This Issue

Change of Leadership at Army Long Term Family Case Management	1
Media Policy Change for Photographing Fallen Soldiers Arriving at Dover	1
A Note From The New Chief of ALTFCM	2
A Note from LTC Betsy Graham	3
Update on Survivor Outreach Services	4
Army Long Term Family Case Management Where Families are First	4
Child and Youth Services	5
Benefits for Stepchildren	5
Guide to Short-Term Grief Counseling Resources	6
Information on Housing and Storage of Household Goods	7



Army Long Term Family Case Management

Serving Families of fallen Soldiers by
providing personalized assistance and
guidance in the months and years ahead

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